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D LETTER TO A YOUNG TEACHER.

DEAR FRIEND:—

Allow me, my friend, to call your attention to a few particulars which should be regarded by you if you would become a model Teacher. You say, perhaps, that you do not expect to become a model,—but you certainly must hope to become a successful teacher,—and if so you must constantly aim to be just what we claim for the model teacher. Let me name three or four qualities which are peculiarly desirable on account of their direct bearing upon your pupils.

CHEERFULNESS.—This is all-important. The school is a miniature world; the teacher the controlling power, and the pupils are the subjects. Let them see that you desire nothing so much as to do them good, and if you really possess this desire, it will make you happy and cheerful. As your pupils assemble in the school-room greet them with the light of a cheerful countenance. You are really the sun of the little community, and you should let no clouds come between you and them, unless such as may be caused by their follies or indiscretions. It was my lot, for a short time, to be a pupil in a school whose teacher was one of those morose, uncongenial, capricious spirits, which cast a shadow on all around them. Nothing pleased her; nothing that we, her pupils, could do would cause her to assume a cheerful look; she never smiled, but often scowled; she

never spoke pleasantly to us, but always in tones of censure and petulance. We lost all respect for her; or, rather, we never gained any; and our chief delight was in annoying her, that we might see the clouds thicken upon her brow. Our associations connected with that school are all sad and unpleasant. Our next experience was under a teacher whose cheerfulness was prominent and constant; she loved her pupils and they loved her, and it was their highest wish to merit her approval, to gain her smiles. To us the school-room was pleasant, and to this day all our memories of the school and teacher are pleasant, and ever will be. As you hope to succeed, let me urge you studiously and constantly to cultivate a spirit of genial cheerfulness. It will be promotive both of health and happiness; it will also greatly increase your influence and usefulness. "*As is the teacher so will be the school.*"

A LOVE FOR YOUR WORK.—I should have placed this as the very first requisite for a successful teacher. One may saw wood, and do it well, and yet have no love for the work. The same may be true of many kinds of work; but it is not true of teaching. A person cannot, in the highest, best, and broadest sense, become a successful teacher, unless he possesses a love for the business, and feels a true and lively interest in the welfare of those under his care. He may perform a certain daily routine of duties, but they will lack vigor and efficiency, and the results will not be what they should be. I would say to you, my friend, at the very outset, that, if you have no taste for the work before you, do not engage in it; it will prove anything but pleasant work. I have sometimes heard teachers say that they *hated* the very name of school; and I have always thought that such must prove *hateful* teachers. I have no reason to anticipate any such feelings on your part. I trust you view the whole subject in a true light, and that you have a heart alive to the business in which you are to engage. You may, and doubtless you will, have days when school and all its exercises will appear burdensome; and at times you may almost despond. Ill health, impure atmosphere, or over work may so affect your nervous system as to cause you to be unfit for any work. But this will only be an exception to your general feeling; and whenever you do thus feel, study carefully to repress sadness, and still to wear the genial countenance. If possible, never yield to feelings of despondency.

A true and sincere love for your vocation will enkindle within you that spirit of earnest and well directed enthusiasm which will tend to give point and success to your efforts. By *enthusiasm* I would not

be misunderstood. I do not mean that reckless zeal which is not according to knowledge; not that over-active feeling which leads to *over-doing* a work, and *un-doing* the workman,—but by it I mean an earnest and devoted application to the accomplishment of a work,—the combined result of a just appreciation of its importance, and a determined will to perform it in the most prompt and efficient manner,—a zeal tempered by prudence and modified by knowledge. With such an enthusiasm you will not only be sure to succeed in your own efforts, but you will also awaken an interest and secure a cheerful co-operation on the part of your pupils and their parents; and without such interest and aid you will fail to accomplish all that you may desire, and all that you ought to accomplish.

INDIVIDUALITY.—No two persons are precisely alike in their views or actions. There may be many points of close resemblance, but there will be shades of difference more or less striking. While you should ever be watchful to learn from others, you should never seek to attain results in precisely the same way that you have seen them secured by others. The great point with you should be to know fully and clearly what you wish to gain; and the second to use all suitable appliances for the accomplishment of the end in view—only using them in your own way. You may receive hints and suggestions which you may safely and profitably incorporate into your own stock of knowledge, and modify by your own peculiar views. Have a way of your own, only be sure that it is a good way. Study to improve upon others, and be sure to improve upon yourself day by day. Some teachers are perfectly content to walk in a beaten track. For them it is sufficient to know that *their* teacher did or said “so and so.” They are willing to follow in the old paths without even admitting that better ones may be found, or old ones improved. They resemble the man who could not be induced to do anything differently from what he had seen his father do it before him. The father had uniformly been to the mill over a very hilly and circuitous road; simply, perhaps, because it was the only one open. After his death a new road was made whereby half the distance was saved and the hills avoided. But the son could never be induced to travel in the new road, and when urged for a reason, he said, “My father always went the old road, and I shall do the same, for I know it is the best.” This was an excess of regard to parental example; and even the old sire, if he could return to earth would, probably, laugh at the son’s stupidity. But no less blind and stupid are some teachers. They tread in beaten tracks without seeking for

better ones, or without walking in them if they see them. Be not, my friend, a stereotype teacher. Old methods may be greatly improved; new and better ones may be devised. If you would make your school interesting, be constantly seeking for new modes for illustrating principles and interesting your pupils, and be sure that they bear the impress of your own mind and thoughts.

ACCOUNTABILITY.—Do not for a single day forget, that you are but an agent of the Great Teacher, and that he will call you to give a strict account of your stewardship. Daily go to him for the instruction you daily need. He can teach you how to teach; he can aid you in all your efforts. Confide in him, and he will not disappoint you. You need much of His spirit to guide and sustain you; much of His wisdom to assist you in your important work. Let your whole life, and all your words and deeds be strongly marked by a truly religious spirit, and in every way do what you can to induce your pupils to feel that they are accountable to their Creator for all their deportment and for the manner in which they attend to all their duties. By your own pure and Christian character, lure them to love and practice all that is lovely and of good report,—and in blessing them you will be doubly blessed.

I might proceed to name other traits and characteristics which should be cultivated by every good teacher, but it will not be necessary. I shall have occasion to allude to some of them in connection with the exercises of the school-room. You already feel, I dare say, that I have set a very high mark for your attainment. But, my friend, is it too high? Your chosen work is one of the most important and ennobling ever intrusted to mortal, and it calls for high qualifications, for excellent and lovely traits, for hearts and intellects well disciplined and ready for every good effort. Unless you *are* what you would have your pupils *become*, you can hardly hope to make them what you *ought* to be, but *are* not. In your daily walk and conversation you must ever exemplify the correctness and the value of the views and principles you would inculcate in the hearts of your pupils. Strive, therefore, to be unto them as a “living epistle,” plain and full of instruction.

I have somewhere read that Napoleon, on his departure for Belgium, thought it prudent to guard with extra care against the dangers which threatened,—having all Europe leagued against him. He therefore sent for a skillful and accomplished workman, between whom and himself the following conversation was held:—

Napoleon. “Do you consider yourself competent to make a coat

of mail of such texture and strength that no weapon whatever can penetrate it?

Workman. "I think I am.

Napoleon. "I wish you to make one with as little delay as possible, and for the same you shall receive eighteen thousand francs.

Workman. "The article shall be ready in the shortest possible time,—and the compensation you offer will well reward me for doing the work thoroughly."

The work was speedily performed, and on an appointed day the artificer took it to the palace. Bonaparte examined it with much care, and then requested the maker to clad himself with the armor. The man obeyed, when the Emperor took two pistols, saying, "We shall now see if this work is of the texture and strength you promised." He then fired at his breast and at his back, time and again; but the armor proved sure proof against such attacks. Next, a long fowling-piece was used, but still the armor proved effectual, and its maker stood unmoved, full of confidence in the completeness of his work.

The delighted Emperor, instead of paying the stipulated price, presented the man with a check for thirty-six thousand francs, saying, "You are one of the few men whose *works* verify their *words*."

And so let teachers go forth to their daily labors with armor bright, and sure proof against the attacks of the ignorant and self-conceited,—ever bearing clear proof that they are thoroughly furnished for the great work before them, and they will not only receive their stipulated reward, but a tenfold greater, from the consciousness of having labored faithfully and successfully; and ever will their well-rendered efforts be held in grateful remembrance in the hearts of those whom they have led to right thought and action.

I know, full well, my friend, under what discouraging circumstances you, and other teachers, may be called to labor;—opposed, perhaps, by the parents for whose children you toil; unencouraged by the wealthy, uncheered by the community; scantily remunerated; your best acts and motives, it may be, grossly perverted and misrepresented,—and others, perchance, reaping where you have sown,—so far as the eye of the world is concerned. But be of good cheer; "In due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not." Though clouds and darkness do sometimes gather around you, and others appear to enter in upon, and, as it were, eat the fruits of your patient and skillful culture,—yet despair not, despond not; in due time all will come right and justice will be done.

It is recorded of an ancient king of Egypt,—one of the Ptolemies,—that he employed a celebrated architect to construct a magnificent light-house for the safety of shipping, and ordered an inscription in favor of himself to be engraved on a conspicuous part. The architect, though inwardly coveting the honor of such a record for himself, felt obliged to comply with the king's order,—but he made the inscription on a plaster resembling stone, though of a perishable substance. After the lapse of years this crumbled away, and the next generation saw another inscription, recording the name, not of the king, but that of the architect, which had been secretly engraved on the durable stone, beneath the perishable covering,—a memorial of the skill of him who planned and reared the colossal structure.

And thus, my friend, will it be with you, if you are faithful to your high trust. The lines which you are daily writing, and the impressions which you are hourly making upon the young and impressible minds and hearts of those under your training, will grow broader and deeper and brighter through all coming time, and the impress of your heart and moulding hand will become distinctly visible, and stand as an ineffaceable record to your fidelity and skill. Then go patiently and hopefully to your noble work, and in the time of the true harvest you shall come again rejoicing, “bringing your sheaves with you.”

Your sincere friend

C.

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF DR. ARNOLD AS A TEACHER.

DR. ARNOLD is well known as a poet, historian, divine and advocate of reform. He attained to more or less eminence in all these characters, yet found his equal, if not his superior, in each. It was as a teacher, that he accomplished the greatest good, made himself best known, loved and revered, and in this profession, it would be difficult to find one to rank beside him.

The attempt to analyze his character is much embarrassed by this variety of occupations, and still more by a peculiarity of the man, so prominent as to form of itself a distinguishing trait. Everything about him so pervaded all others, and so united with them, as to render their separation difficult in the extreme. Some characteristics may, indeed, be detached from the rest for the purpose of examination, but in their effects they are inseparable.

From the time Dr. Arnold commenced his labors as a private tu-

tor at Laleham, until his death; his letters, conversation, and whole life show one point, which is, perhaps, more noticeable than others. This is the elevated idea he seems to have had of his work, and his entire devotion to it. He considered the mission of a teacher as superior to all but the ministry, equal to that, and bent all his energies to a fitting performance of its duties. Some idea of this may be gained from the division of his time at Laleham, where twelve hours out of the twenty-four were given to his pupils. At Rugby, he held himself *always* ready to do whatever might be required by or for them.

The enthusiasm with which he entered into his work is another important characteristic. It did not diminish as he grew accustomed to the occupation of teaching, for it had no time to diminish. One project was no sooner in successful operation, than another, or a half dozen of others, sprung up to take its place in the active mind of Arnold. True, this enthusiasm sometimes made him needless difficulties, but it carried him successfully through the very difficulties it caused, and generally gained for him the credit of a triumph over unavoidable opposition.

An unusual way of looking upon *Work*, seems more a trait of the man as a man, than as a teacher, but his zeal in communicating that idea to his pupils, brings it within the limits of the subject. He regarded it as man's birthright, not so much a curse imposed on the race at its fall, as a blessing, and felt it the noblest duty of man, to *work*, heart and soul, in that part of the vineyard allotted him to "dress and keep." Lord Bacon's sentence, "In this world, God only and the angels may be spectators," was the full expression of his theory, and his practice did not fall below it.

In the especial province of the instructor; the intellectual training of the pupil, his peculiar excellence, was in making his scholars feel a kind of obligation, to go on and explore thoroughly for themselves the paths of learning with which he seemed so familiar. In doing this, he communicated nothing but what he himself realized. It was to him a sacred duty to develop the mental faculties to their full extent, but with the strict requirement that it was to be done in subordination to the moral and religious culture.

And this brings out another most important characteristic—the earnest religious feeling which showed itself in everything he said or wrote, or did. The sentence, "What we respect here, is 1st, religious and moral principles; 2d, gentlemanly conduct, and 3d, intellectual ability," was often upon his lips, always in his heart. No one be-

lieved less than he in the efficacy of homilies, delivered on religious subjects, at stated seasons, and he never gave them, but heart-felt religion was so mingled with his very being, that it came naturally with everything. Dr. Arnold reversed the common practice of carrying the world into religion, and carried his religion into the world. There came to almost all the "School-House Boys," a dawn of new light, by whose advancing rays they saw clearly their duty to themselves and to their God, and whether it came during their stay at Rugby, or far on in life, they seldom failed to trace it directly to the Doctor.

The catalogue might be indefinitely extended without covering the ground any more fully than by the first two, and probably, no two of those who knew and loved him best, would agree in their selection, were they to take a given number of his prominent points.

His character was in a high degree symmetrical, although not what we usually call by that name. It was not the symmetry of the chiseled, polished slab, but of the storm-beaten rock, whose very roughness adds to its stately beauty. While his traits of character all stood out in bold relief, they yet blended and shaded together.

Founded on this completeness rather than on any one element of it, was the power he had of commanding a thorough influence over the boys of the Sixth, or highest form. It was the whole man they revered, almost worshipped, not any single thing about him. Here lay the secret of his great usefulness. He had unbounded faith in the efficacy of an intermediate class between the teachers and the great mass of the school, and so managed that his hopes were fully realized. His own remark shows his great reliance upon them. "When I have confidence in the Sixth," said he, "there is no post in England which I would exchange for this, but if they fail me, I must go." He worked so heartily *with* his boys, that they, without losing a particle of their respect for him, forgot that he was head-master of Rugby, and they his pupils, and worked on as he worked, more and more nobly, as his influence deepened its effect upon them.

Other teachers may have produced better scholars, none have sent out better men, for none have so succeeded in awakening the desire and the will to work, and none have secured a greater love from their pupils.

Wherever Englishmen nobly die, or more nobly live, battling the wrong wherever it is found, in their own hearts or in the world, there the name of Arnold is revered; his memory enshrined in the heart of hearts of brave men; and at the first resurrection, the resurrection

of the just, there shall rise from the city's crowded cemeteries, from the quiet grave-yards of country villages, from the forest depths of Australia, from the battle-fields of the Crimea, from the blood-stained plains of India, from every spot under heaven, where English hands have wrought, or English hearts have suffered or hoped, those who shall pour glad praises on his head, and witness to the abundant harvest of the tearfully sown seed.

C.

NEW BRITAIN.

For the Common School Journal

AN EARNEST LIFE.

BY SAMUEL J. WHITON.

* Life should be a scene of action. The man who dreams away its precious hours in idleness and sloth, has not fulfilled its laws. Life without a purpose, existence without an aim, being without activity, must be a dreary state. Life's most potent charm is earnest toil; and he who drinks not from the fountain of such perennial joys, but yields to inaction's dreamy stupor, loses a precious privilege. Richer than the regal splendor of an eastern court, brighter than the radiant dawning of a lovely morn, purer than the soft hues of departing day, is the consciousness of duty well performed.

One of the most essential ingredients of an earnest life, is thought. It enables us to direct our efforts in such a manner, as to achieve a greater amount of good. It reanimates the drooping spirits, infuses into the mind new life and vigor, and awakens us to greater zeal in action. There are moments in the history of almost every one, when the mind casts aside the joys and griefs of outward life, and holds communion with its own inner self. Then it is that the purer feelings, the nobler impulses of the soul, which, perchance, have long lain dormant, come forth and shed their influence through our being. How richly fraught with pleasure are such moments! They inspire us with more earnest purposes; they animate us to renew the struggle for truth and right, with more determined energy; they incite us to press onward in the path of life with braver hearts and brighter hopes.

What if misfortunes sometimes gather round thee, tinging the present with sable hues? What if adversity's chilling breath blights thy long-cherished purposes? What if fancied friends prove false, and all the world seems coldly dark? Sink not, for

"Disappointment is the common lot of man."

Life's sweetest dreams are often blasted, and hope's brightest rays chilled with the damps of death. Despond not, for there comes a brighter day, when golden light shall dissipate the gloom.

"Haste not! Rest not! Calmly wait:
Meekly bear the storms of fate!
Duty be thy polar guide—
Do the right, whate'er betide!
Haste not! Rest not! Conflicts past,
God shall crown thy work, at last."

We need some trials in order to fit us to perform life's duties with earnestness. When fickle fortune smiles her blandest smiles, and all the world seems radiant with joy, resplendent with hope's most beautiful hues, we are prone to sink into listless apathy. Let us not yield to despair, then, when darkness shuts out the light of joy, and dims the rays of hope. A noble soul is not easily crushed into despondency. Let us rise up from a contest with difficulties, with renewed strength to prosecute our work. We should determine to press forward, and heartily perform *our* part in the drama of life. We should have courage to rally under difficulties, faith to hope for a brighter future, and energy to perform our present duty with diligence.

An earnest life should be a generous life,—generous alike of good deeds and kind words. Man yearns for sympathy from fellow-man. Although he loudly boasts of "manly independence," yet when the hour of fiery trial comes, he fain would lean on some friendly arm. He, then, who would cheer his brother-man along the path of life, must have a kindly nature. Many a man has been won to paths of rectitude by gentle words and generous deeds, who otherwise would have trod the downward road. A kindly deed is like a glow-worm, shining the brighter when darkness broods around. To the poor and sorrow-stricken, it yields a blessed balm. Yon man, who plods along from day to day in one continuous round of toil, will feel his life renewed by such an act. Yon poor widow and yon lone orphan, breasting alone the storms of life, will feel their courage revived by a kindly deed. Go where you will, among the high or low, the rich or poor, wherever the human heart is found, there you will find,—deeply hidden though it be under a rough exterior,—some chord which gentleness will touch. Ah, yes! thou who wouldst live an earnest life—earnest in *goodness*—fail not to cheer the toiler, to comfort the stricken, and aid the distressed.

Some men are never contented with the sphere of life in which they are placed. They are constantly longing for some higher sta-

tion—some air-built castle far in the dim future—where imagined talents yield a rich harvest of imagined results. Such men will hardly ever “act in the living present.” This greedy desire for fame and fortune has been the ruin of many a mind. Let not the ideal displace the real. Let earnestness be visible in every-day life. If you can not win the laurel wreath of fame, mayhap those purer joys that flow from quiet deeds of love, will crown your life with a brighter halo. Toil on, then, wherever your lot is cast, with earnest heart and cheerful mien, remembering that

“The path of duty is the way to glory.”

To live an earnest life is not an easy task. An unguarded heart will be enticed by a thousand gay allurements. We need to be constantly on our guard to ward off the demon of sloth. We need energy to impel us onward; caution to direct our steps, and foresight to shape our actions rightly.

If thou wouldst lead a happy life, *live earnestly*. Work is waiting to be done. Sit not idly down and dream away the hours. Sloth will sadly mar the beauties of the soul. DO SOMETHING, AND DO IT WELL. Spend not thy time in vain imaginings, but,

“Do the duty nearest thee.”

Crush out the false and implant the true. Work with soul-felt energy for some good purpose; hesitate not though difficulties obstruct thy path; cease not thy labors while work remains for thee to do.

“Rest not! life is sweeping by—
Go and dare before you die:
Something mighty and sublime
Leave behind to conquer time!
Glorious 'tis to live for aye,
When these forms have passed away.”

Glorious indeed! And if thou wouldst reach that blest abode, where joy forever reigns, fail not to labor well to-day.

Teacher, wilt thou not lead an earnest life? Think of the work thou hast to do, in training aright the youthful mind, and answer. What if you sometimes seem to labor in vain? Despair not! He who sows shall reap; and though, perchance, the harvest be long delayed, it will surely come. Sow good seed and thou shalt reap a rich reward. Labor faithfully in thy work, striving with all thy might to do it well. Then thou shalt have bright visions of a glorious future; and when death's gathering gloom shuts out the light of earth, thou canst calmly say, “*My work is done.*”

WESTFORD, Ct., March 17, 1859.

ASPIRATIONS.

There are moments in the experience of all, when duty and destiny are revealed to us by a sudden inspiration; when we behold with undimmed vision, the conditions and possibilities of our being. Our paths through this dusty world sometimes lead us over high mountains, upon whose silent summits life is transfigured before us, so that we see its native glory and its heavenly attendance. We see our true inheritance, and the effort, the resolve and longing, with which we rise to claim it, we call aspirations.

By aspiration then, we do not mean simply strong desire for the achievements of Genius, or great power and high places: it is something far better. It comes not in idle day-dreams or brilliant cloud-castles, it is not in the heart dissatisfied with the duties and the work of the present, nor in a murmuring wish for varied circumstances; yet the humblest life, the lowliest cares and labors, the most wearisome, may be glorified by an earnest, patient spirit, which though in darkness, is *waiting* for the day, and which the light of true aspiration shall elevate and purify. Yearnings of the soul for the spiritually pure, the infinitely perfect, the true recognition of ideal life, and the striving to realize it in daily development; "For Longing moulds in *clay* what *Life* carves in the *marble* Real." These are aspirations and must sometimes fill a part of every life; although their indwelling presence but too soon may vanish, they shall leave a memory and an influence. Life and nature are filled with winning voices, calling us from the lowliness of mere worldliness, to the purity and holiness of a true spiritual existence, and we listen to them, gazing upon the varied forms through which they speak to us. Thanks for the joy and blessing, the fervent hope and quiet trust, that have been born into the heart, when, seemingly, all of earthliness and sin have been laid as an offering upon the altar of devotion to Nature. Life may have been darkened by many sorrows, yet thanks and sweet remembrances forever, for the exquisite joy and comfort, the uplifting and purifying of the spirit, known and felt by the sea-shore, in the forest and on the mountain. Clouds and sunshine, wind and storm, the stars and flowers, the faint flush of the dawning and the rich hues of the sunset; all these shall bring us blessings in greater purity of heart, in worthier love and higher life. Aspiration shall teach us the *true* meaning of life, and aid us in the realization of its greatness and significance. But the weak and unworthy hearts of idle dreamers, or careless pleasure-seekers, can know

naught of its power. Vain and unsatisfying will seem the days that must pass all too slowly for those who only wish them *gone*, and who can but find an aimless existence a weary one. Mere living is not *life*. Life is *action*, endurance, ceaseless striving and patient hoping, and in seeking to make it such, the heart in higher risings for perfection shall nearer reach it. In that which we shall *will* to accomplish, that which is really worthy of our best endeavors, there shall be no failure; and that which may seem thus, shall at last be proved only for *good*. The dawning of each day, and its dying evening hours, shall bring us new impressions of the greatness and nobleness of the work that must here be done, and in which we, with joyful willingness, are called to join. The consciousness of many duties should bring the hope of success in their performance, and the more distasteful they may seem, the greater will be the satisfaction in striving to make them otherwise by a beautiful and patient spirit, in which they may be met, aye, welcomed, it may be, as only needed discipline. High aims and aspirations shall not all fail nor die away as pleasant, yet vain dreamings; for, let the good be far, and the prize so eagerly and hopefully sought, even upon the mountain peaks where Genius proudly rises, Aspiration has reached a height as glorious, and if triumphant in the *past*, in the future it must be also. Those who have cherished these holy, thrilling aspirations, can never wholly lose their master power; and the blissful visions of the future, which have brightened the present and the past, shall often return, bringing exquisite joy—even in memory. The “shadowy future” can be met, aye, and welcomed with a brave and trustful heart that fears no labor, nor too confidentially and eagerly claims the victory, which must at last by patient and earnest striving be gloriously won. Weak, despairing one, sink not and fail! but hopefully and cheerfully “toil on,” “encouraged by these self-same ends—these self-same hopes, and fears, and aspirations.”

M. F.

MISS KINDLY'S METHOD OF TEACHING CHILDREN TO READ.

HAVE you never visited Miss Kindly's school? You ought, then, certainly to go there the first opportunity. There are so many things that she does excellently well. You ought to see how she commences a new term; how early she is at her post, and how affectionately she receives her little ones, as they drop in one after another; with what

real interest she inquires about their fathers and mothers, and brothers, and sisters, and pets; what pleasant words she has adapted to each one; how patiently, nay, how enjoyingly she receives the deluge of kisses that has been gathering for her through the vacation, and how heartily she returns them; and how firm the conviction is in the minds of all the children, that, next to their own dear mothers, (fathers are sometimes excepted,) the very best friend they have in the world is Miss Kindly. The school reverently and piously opened, it is a treat to observe how immediately she brings her scholars, the new as well as the old, into school discipline, by setting them to march in exact order, to clap their hands in concert, and to perform other physical exercises at the word of command, while they are fancying, in their simplicity, that they are having a grand play. And so, in truth, they are.

Then you should hear one of her "Object Lessons." Taking a cap, or a glove, or a pencil, or an acorn, or a leaf, or a flower, no matter what, she will fix every eye upon it, and make it a key to unlock her pupils' minds, and to draw forth more thought and better expression than you would suppose them capable of. But the exercises which they seem to enjoy the most are what she calls her "Moral Lessons," but what they call "Miss Kindly's stories." Both names are equally appropriate. She tells a story illustrating some virtue or fault, and then appeals directly to the consciences of her pupils for their judgment upon it. Her method is essentially the same with that of Mr. Cowdery, in his admirable book of Moral Lessons, but, in accordance with the age of her scholars, is less elaborate.

"Did this boy do right?"

"Oh, no!" "No!" "No!"

"What ought he to have done?" They express their opinion.

"How would he have felt to be so treated himself?"

"Very badly."

"I hope you will never do so," etc.

One of the most marked characteristics of the school, is her method of teaching her little ones how to read, which seems to me to have more of artistic beauty, and is certainly more successful than any that I have ever witnessed elsewhere. It is alike philosophical and practical; as, indeed, a true philosopher must lie at the basis of all correct practice. Having formed her "lambkins," as she sometimes calls her abecedarians into a class, she spends two or three days in such exercises with them as will lead them to feel perfectly at home, and train them to follow directions, to think together, and to express their

thoughts. These exercises are partly vocal, partly gymnastic, and partly intellectual. They consist in repeating sentences, words, syllables, and elementary sounds, either individually or in concert; in various physical exercises; in object lessons; in story-telling; in simple lessons in counting and computing; in drawing lines on the slates, with which they are all furnished; in familiar conversation about home friends, and home scenes, etc. Having thus prepared the way, she introduces the lessons in reading somewhat as follows:

Miss K. "Now, do you all say *ox*."

Class. "Ox!" "Ox!" "Ox!"

Miss K. "Who of you ever saw an ox?"

Most of the class raise their hands.

Miss K. "Tell us, Charles, where you ever saw an ox."

Charles. "Oh! we have two at home; and father yokes them and makes them plow, and draw hay, and potatoes, and wood."

When Charles has finished his account, the other children say where they have seen oxen, etc.

"How many horns has an ox?"

"Two; and he sometimes hooks with them."

"If one of his horns were sawed off, how many would he have then?"

"One."

"How many eyes has he?"

"Two."

"How many feet has he?"

"Four."

"How many horns have two oxen?"

"Four."

Having carried this conversation as far as she deems it useful, Miss K. turns to one of the class and says, "Now, Susan, would not you like to learn how to write *ox* on your slate, so that when you go home and show your slate to your mother, she will kiss you and say, 'Why, Susan, you have written *ox*.'"

"Oh, yes!" replied Susan, eagerly, and all the rest join.

"Well, then," says Miss K., going to the blackboard, and taking a crayon, you must first make a round letter like this," drawing a large O. She uses the word "letter" without defining it, knowing that the children will learn its meaning, as they do that of other words, from its use, and that a formal definition would only confuse them.

"What does this letter look like?"

One suggests a wheel; another a round cake; others a cent, the moon, etc.

"Now, Susan, come and see if you can make a round letter."

Susan tries, and after her the rest. To each one Miss K. has a kind word for the effort, if not for the performance. They are then sent to their seats to try to make "round letters" upon their slates; some of their first attempts are, of course, rude and odd enough.

At their next lesson, after some preliminary conversation, Miss K. goes to the blackboard, where the **O** has remained as a model for the class since the last lesson, and says to them:

"Now I will show you how to make another letter. You must first draw a straight line, so," suiting the action to the word; "and then you must draw another straight line across it, so," making by the two lines a large **X** in its simplest form. "What does this letter look like?"

"Like father's saw-horse," says little Peter.

"Now, how many letters have I made?"

"Two."

"And these two letters mean *ox*. Henry, come and see if you can write **Ox**."

Henry tries, and all the rest. They then return to their seats, and engage in attempts to write **Ox** upon their slates. Miss K., as she passes them, notices and directs their work, and encourages them by kind words.

The time arrives for their third lesson. "What have you been learning to write?" asks the teacher.

"**Ox**."

"Now, all say as I do: *ox, ox*, (not pronouncing the names of the letters, but separating their sounds,) *ox; ox, o-x; o-x, ox; o-x, ox.*"

When, by repetitions, her pupils have fully learned to separate these sounds into utterance and in their minds, Miss K. proceeds:

"This round letter means *o*," giving it the short sound of *o*; "and this letter like a saw-horse means *x*," giving not the name, but simply the sound of the letter. "Now, William, you may take the pointer and point to the letter which means *o*; and you, Sarah, may point to the letter which means *x*."

The exercise is continued under a variety of forms, until the association is fixed in the minds of the children, between the written letters and their primary sounds. Miss K. then feels that the corner-stone has been laid for the building she has undertaken, and dismisses the

class. Of the names of the letters not a word has yet been said. "It would only confuse the children," says Miss K., "to attempt to associate a letter with different sounds at the same time. And we shall have no need whatever of the names of the letters till we come to oral spelling, or to different sounds of the same letter." A. C.

Massachusetts Teacher.



NATURAL HISTORY.

[THE following excellent address was given before an Educational Meeting, in the State House, Boston, Mass., by Prof. Agassiz. It is full of instruction. Read every word of it and ponder.—RES. ED.]

"I wish to awaken a conviction that the knowledge of nature, in our days, lies at the very foundation of the prosperity of States; that the study of the phenomena of nature is one of the most efficient means for the development of the human faculties, and that, on these accounts, it is highly important that that branch of education should be introduced into our schools as soon as possible.

To satisfy you how important the study of nature is to the community at large, I need only allude to the manner in which, in modern times, man has learned to control the forces of nature, and to work out the material which our earth produces. The importance of that knowledge to the welfare of man is everywhere manifested to us; and I can refer to no better evidence to prove that there is hardly any other training better fitted to develop the highest faculties of man, than by alluding to that venerable old man, Humboldt,* who is the embodiment of the most extensive human knowledge in our day, who has acquired that position, and who has become the object of reverence throughout the world merely by his devotion to the study of nature.

If it be true that a knowledge of nature is so important for the welfare of States, and for the training of men to such high positions among their fellows, by the development of their best faculties, how desirable that such study should form a part of all education! and I trust that the time when it will be introduced into our schools will only be so far removed as is necessary for the preparation of teachers capable of imparting that instruction in the most elementary form.

*Deceased since this was penned.

The only difficulty was to find teachers equal to the task ; for, in his estimation, the elementary instruction was the most difficult.

It was still a mistaken view with many, that a teacher is always sufficiently prepared to impart the first elementary instruction to those entrusted to his care. Nothing could be farther from the truth ; and he believed that in entrusting the education of the young to incompetent teachers, the opportunity was frequently lost of unfolding the highest capacities of the pupils, by not attending at once to their wants. A teacher should always be far in advance of those he instructs ; and there was nothing more painful than for a teacher to feel that he must repress, if possible, those embarrassing questions which the pupils may wish to ask, but which may be beyond his reach.

He conceived that nothing but the inexhaustible thirst for knowledge which is imparted in human nature, enables children to sustain their interest in study, when the elements are imparted to them in the manner they are. Could anything be conceived less attractive than the learning of those twenty-four signs which are called letters, and to combine them into syllables, and then into words ; and all taught in the most mechanical and hum-drum way, as if there was no sense in it ! And yet, there is a deep sense in it, and there is, in those very letters, material for the most attractive and instructive information, if it were only in the head of the teacher when he has to impart it. Let him show his young pupils how men have learned to write their thoughts in words ; how the art of writing was invented ; in what way it was done in the beginning ; how it has been shortened in its operations, which are now so rapid that the writer follows the words of the speaker with as great certainty as if he saw them already written, and had only to copy them ; and then the child will be eager to emulate that, and will be ready to avail himself of the advantages which a possession of the art will give him over those who have it not.

But then, I say in order to create this interest in the child, it is not sufficient that he be taught mechanically, that such a figure is A, and that B, and C, and so on, but he is to be shown how men came to write the letters in that way, and that the letters are only syllables to express thoughts, and that the earliest and simplest ways of representing these thoughts was by showing objects as they are. I have been a teacher since I was fifteen years of age, and I am a teacher now, and I hope I shall be a teacher all my life. I do love to teach, and there is nothing so pleasant to me as to develop the faculties of

my fellow-beings who, in their early age, are intrusted to my care, and I am satisfied that there are branches of knowledge which are better taught without books than with them; and there are some cases already so obvious that I wonder why it is that teachers always resort to books when they would teach some new branch in their schools.

When we teach music, we do not learn it by rote, we do not commit it to memory, but we take an instrument and learn to play upon it. When we would study natural history, instead of books let us take specimens—stones, minerals, crystals. When we would study plants, let us go to the plants themselves, and not to the books describing them. When we would study animals, let us observe animals; and when we would study geography, let us not resort to maps and text-books, but take a class of children and go into the fields, and look over the hills and valleys, the lakes and rivers, and learn that a knowledge of the earth consists in knowing what mountains and hills there are, what rivers flow, what are the accumulations of water and the expanse of land. And then, having shown them that land, let us show them a representation of what they know, that they may compare it with what they have before them, and tell them that that is the way in which the things they have seen may be represented, and then the maps will have a meaning for them. Then you can go to maps and books, but not before you have given them some hints as to what these things mean, and what east, west, north and south are; not merely by representing them by the letters E., W., N. and S. upon a square piece of paper, with all sorts of dots upon it, one representing Spain, the other France, the other England, the other the United States, which in their estimation have about the size of the piece of paper on which they have learned it.

I well remember that when I was a teacher at Neufchatel, I objected to this mode of teaching geography in our schools. I was satisfied it could be done otherwise, and I asked that I might have a class of the youngest children, who were admitted to the school, and teach them in another way. The Board of Education would not grant me leave, and I resorted to another means. I took my own children, my oldest, a boy of six, my girls, children of four and a half and two and a half years, one hardly capable of walking, and invited the children of my neighbors. Some came upon the arms of their mothers, others were able to walk by themselves. I took these young children upon a hill above the city, and there showed them the magnificent crescent of the Alps standing before them, their

peaks piercing the clouds, and told them how far away they were, then pointed to the hills between these, and the lake at our feet; and when they had become very familiar with all these, and enjoyed the beautiful scenery, I took from my portfolio a raised map, in which the natural features of the country are attempted to be imitated, in paste-board, and turning them away from the scene, I showed them everything represented on a small scale, and they recognized the very peaks they saw before them; they saw the lake which was spreading before them as a blue spot upon that map; and so they learned the meaning of maps, and afterwards could appreciate the map which was not even raised, but only with black and white marks representing the same features. From that day, geography became no longer a dry study, but a desirable part of their education.

I have undertaken to address you upon the desirableness of introducing the study of natural history into our schools, and of using that instruction as a means of developing the faculties of children and leading them to a knowledge of the Creator. Natural History, I have already said, should be taught from objects and not from books, and you see at once that this requires teachers who know these objects; not only teachers who can read and say whether a lesson has been committed faithfully to memory, but they must know these objects before they can teach them, and they should bring these objects into the school, and not only exhibit them to the scholars, but place them in the hands of each scholar.

Some years ago I was requested by the Secretary of the Board of Education to give some lectures on Natural History to the teachers in different parts of the State, in those interesting meetings which are known as Teachers' Institutes. I had been asked to give some instructions upon insects, that the teachers might be prepared to show what insects are injurious to vegetation and what are not, and be the means of imparting that information to all.

I thought the best way of answering the call was, to place at once an object of this kind into their own hands, for I knew that no verbal instruction could be transformed into actual knowledge; that whatever I might say would be carried away as words, and not as the impression of things—and what was needed was the impression of things. Therefore I went out shortly before the exercises commenced, and collected several hundred grasshoppers and brought them into the room, and having first etherized them, so that they should not jump about, I put one of them into the hands of each teacher. It created universal laughter. It appeared ridiculous to

all. But, I have the satisfaction of saying that the examination of these objects had not been carried on long before every one became interested, and instead of looking at *me*, they looked at the *thing*.

At first, I pointed to things which could not be easily seen. They said, 'These things are too small to be seen.' I replied, 'Look again, and learn to look, for I can see things ten times smaller than those to which I have called your attention; it is only want of practice that renders you unable to see them.' The power of the human eye is very great, and it is only the want of practice which sets such narrow limits to its powers.

Having examined one object, take another which has some similarity to it, and analyze its parts, and point out the differences between that and the object examined before, and you are at once upon that track, so important in all education, which consists in comparison. It is by comparison that we ascertain the differences which exist between things; it is by comparison that we ascertain the general features of things; and it is by comparison that we reach general propositions. In fact, comparisons are at the bottom of all philosophy, and without comparisons we never can generalize; without comparisons we never get beyond the knowledge of isolated, disconnected facts.

Now, do you not see what importance there must be in such training—how it will awaken the faculties and develop them—how it will be suggestive of further inquiries and further comparisons? And as soon as one has begun that sort of study, there is no longer a limit to it. In this way, we can become better acquainted with ourselves, we can more fully understand our own nature and our own relations to the world at large. We can learn how we are related to the whole animal kingdom, if we once begin that comparison. At first it might seem difficult to find any resemblance between man and a quadruped, or between the quadruped and birds, or between birds and reptiles or between reptiles and fishes; and if we were to attempt to compare a fish with man, the very idea would seem preposterous; and yet, the two are constructed upon the same plan; the same elements of structure which we may trace in the fish are presented again in man, only in a more elevated combination; and it may be shown, in the simplest way, that there is a plain gradation leading up from the fish to the noble stature of man. And these comparisons are the best means of developing all our faculties, because they call out not only the powers of observation, but also the ability of the mind to generalize and at the same time discriminate. They call out, in fact, all those

abilities which distinguish one man from another, which give men power over other men—the ability of discriminating judiciously and of combining properly—the ability of ascertaining the differences as well as the resemblances. The one constitutes the art of observing; the other constitutes the art of philosophy, the art of thinking.

The difficult art of thinking can be better fostered by this method, than in any other way. When we study logic, or mental philosophy, in the text-books, which we commit to memory, it is not the mind which we cultivate, it is memory alone. The mind may come in, but if it does, it is only in an accessory way. But if we learn to think by unfolding thoughts ourselves, from an examination of objects brought before us, then we actually learn to think, and to apply this ability to think to the realities of life.

It is only by the ability of observing for ourselves that we can free ourselves from the burthen of authority. As long as we have not learned to settle questions for ourselves, we go by authority, or we take the opinion of our neighbor;—that is, we remain tools in his hands, if he chooses to use us up in that way, or we declare our inability to have an opinion of our own. And how shall we form an opinion of our own otherwise than by examining the facts in the case? And where can we learn to examine facts more readily than by taking at first those facts which are forever unchangeable, those facts over which man, with all his pride, can have no control? Man can not cause the sun to move in space, or change the relations of the members of the solar system to each other, or make the seed to sprout out of its season, or make the oak produce apples. Man must take the phenomena of nature as they are; and in learning this, he learns truth and humility. He learns that what exists in nature is true, and to value truth, and that he must bow to what is,—to what he can not change in the nature of things. But, at the same time, he learns how to ascertain what things are; and how they came to be; and while he learns that, he acquires a power which can never be lessened, but which is ever increasing in proportion as his opportunity for further observation is increased.

It is only by the development of all his faculties that we can make man what he may be; it is only in giving to his mind the food which will nourish all his faculties, that we accomplish this end. If we only cultivate the imagination, the taste, the memory, the culture of the senses is neglected, the ability of observing is neglected, and all those abilities which man may acquire by the culture of his senses, by the art of observing, are left untrained.

The reason why we so frequently see scholars who do not do well in school is because their abilities lie in another direction from that which suits others; it is because one great element is left out of the system of education—that which appeals to the senses, to the power of observation—that which requires activity and manipulation; and while only the imaginative faculties and the memory are cultivated, which will suit some minds perfectly, and be the very food they want, others are left starving for the want of the food which their nature requires.

I say, therefore, that in our age, when the importance of the study of Natural History is so manifest, by its many applications to the wants of man, I would add that one means of culture to our system of education, and add it as soon as it is possible to educate the teachers who may be capable of imparting the information; and that can be done easily by following the same wise method which has been followed in the introduction of every other branch. How was it when Physical Geography was introduced into our schools? One man went about from school to school to give instruction in that branch.

He had his pupils, and those pupils are now teachers. Do the same thing now. Select a few men who have the aptitude and the practical skill to teach, and let them go forth, to the Teachers' Institutes at first, and then into the schools. Let them show what can be taught, and very soon the information will be spread abroad, the ability to teach will be acquired, and in a few years we may have a system of education embracing that important branch that is wanting now, and which I believe to be really one of the most important additions which can be made to any system of education.

OBJECT LESSON.—A BOOK.

[*Holding a book before the class.*]

Teacher.—What are the parts of which this book is composed?

Pupils.—Cover, paper, leaves, back, printing, ink, pages, etc.

T.—Let us examine the covers of books; what are they composed of? *P.*—Leather, cloth, paper, pasteboard, glue, gilding, etc.

T.—What kinds of leather are used in binding books? *P.*—Sheep skin, calf, Russia, Morocco, etc. *T.*—Which are the strongest kinds

of binding? *P.*—Russia and calf. *T.*—What leather is used most in binding? *P.*—Sheep. Why? *P.*—Because it is the cheapest.

(Passing a book in Russia binding around the class.)

T.—What do you find peculiar in Russia leather? *P.*—It smells different from other leather. *T.*—Can you tell me what gives it this peculiar odor? *P.*—We don't know. *T.*—It is the oil of the bark of the birch tree, that is used in currying it. Do you know what *curry* means? *P.*—It means to dress the leather, to cleanse and color it, and prepare it to be used. *T.*—Russia leather is very much valued in binding, because it is not liable to mould, and insects never injure it.

T.—Are all books bound in leather? *P.*—Some are bound in cloth and some in paper; some have leather backs and cloth or paper side covers.

(Exhibit specimens.)

T.—What is used to give strength and firmness to the cover of a book? *P.*—Pasteboard.

(Exhibit different kinds and qualities of pasteboard.)

T.—What is used to fasten the cloth or paper to the pasteboard? *P.*—Paste. *T.*—Of what is paste made? *P.*—Flour and water, boiled.

T.—What is used to fasten the cover to the back of a book? *P.*—Glue.

(Exhibit a piece of glue.)

T.—Of what is glue made? *P.*—We don't know. *T.*—It is made of the clippings of hides and hoofs of animals, by boiling them to a jelly. *(Put a piece of glue between two books or pieces of paper.)* *T.*—Why do not these books stick together? *P.*—Because the glue has to be softened first in water, and then heated.

T.—Can you think of anything that resembles glue? *P.*—Jujube paste resembles glue. *(Exhibit specimen of jujube.)* *T.*—In what are they alike, and in what unlike?

(Examine and test their properties, and introduce and explain the words adhesive, brittle, flexible, elastic, edible, animal, vegetable, etc. Compare also with other adhesive substances, as shoemaker's wax, wafers, gum arabic, mortar, solder, etc.)

T.—What are the letters on the back of the book made of? One pupil says, gold; another says, I don't think it is real gold. *T.*—Yes, it is genuine gold. Gold leaf is first spread over the back of the cover, and then the letters are stamped down through it into the leather or cloth. *P.*—I should think it would cost a good deal. *T.*—

Gold leaf is very thin. (*Exhibit a specimen.*) It would take 280,000 leaves to make the thickness of a single inch. This would be more than you could count in two days. Of course one thickness of it would not be very costly.

T.—What is the use of the book cover? *P.*—To preserve the book and keep it neat.

T.—What do you call the person that covers books? *P.*—Book-binder.

In a similar manner the teacher can proceed to speak of the ink employed in printing a book, and compare printers' ink with writing ink. Different kinds of books may be explained and illustrated, as writing books, account books, blank books, passbooks, pocket books, etc. The terms *folio*, *quarto*, *octavo*, and *duodecimo*, may here be learned and applied; also the words *author*, *compiler*, *editor*, *publisher*, *copyright*, the difference between *publisher* and *bookseller*, etc. The attention of the pupils may be called to the title page, the phrases *first edition*, *stereotype edition*, *revised edition*, *preface*, *dedication*, *running title*, *table of contents*, *index*, *margin*, *signatures* at the bottom of the pages, etc. The value and uses of books will also furnish a fruitful topic of useful conversation. Children will be interested in talking of the books that are most read—the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Robinson Crusoe*, etc.

The manufacture of paper, of which books are chiefly composed, will, of itself, furnish a theme sufficient for one or more object lessons, and the foregoing sketch covers ground enough for six or eight separate exercises.—W. H. WELLS.

GRADED SCHOOLS.

FROM THE LATE REPORT OF HON. D. N. CAMP, SUPERINTENDENT
OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

SCHOOLS of sixty, eighty, and sometimes of a hundred children, are placed under one teacher. If these schools were composed of scholars of nearly equal age and attainments, they might be classified so that large numbers could be taught at once, and all receive a proportionate share of instruction; but these large schools, with a single teacher, are almost universally mixed schools, where different ages and different grades of scholarship are brought together. It is not

unusual to find forty recitations a day in one of these schools, embracing studies from the alphabet to the higher mathematics and the principles of the natural sciences. It is impossible for any one teacher, whatever may be his attainments and qualifications, to hear so many classes, and do justice to the pupils. The recitations must be hurried, the instruction meagre and superficial with all, or a part be almost entirely neglected.

Parents and guardians sometimes flatter themselves that as their children attend school where there is a well qualified teacher, they are well taught and their minds developed harmoniously. There hardly could be a greater mistake, for although the teacher may be a superior man, and the force of his character be impressed upon all his pupils, it is nevertheless true that there can be no constant, thorough, harmonious teaching. The individual traits of character cannot be well understood, or the wants of each pupil be known so that his mind can be properly disciplined. The development is partial, imperfect, the instruction fragmentary, and, to a great extent, disconnected. These schools should be graded, but if they are not, the employment of assistants, simply to aid the younger pupils and instruct, while the principal has the oversight of all, would add much to the power of the school, and contribute to the better advancement of all connected with it.

In most of the smaller districts good female teachers should be employed through the year. A large proportion of the schools in these districts can be as well taught by a woman as by a man. Women, fully competent, in character and attainments, to control and instruct these schools, are more easily obtained than men of equal attainments. No district can afford to employ an incompetent teacher. But a good female teacher may be secured at less expense than is often incurred in obtaining an unqualified male teacher.

In a very few of these schools are young men employed in the summer terms. By the employment of efficient, well qualified women, the same teachers may be continued in school through the year.

There are now 65 towns in the state that have Graded schools. Of the 94 towns that have no Graded school, 16 have more than four hundred children enumerated between the ages of four and sixteen. In most of these a Graded school might be supported, for at least ten months in the year, the higher department under a permanent teacher, giving to all of suitable attainments, the privileges of a High school, without leaving their native town. Of the remaining towns, or those

with less than four hundred children enumerated, nearly all would furnish scholars sufficient to support such a school for at least six months in a year, giving to those boys who are required to labor on the farm a portion of the year, an opportunity to attend a good school in the winter months. In those towns where the families are so scattered that no consolidation of districts or union can be effected, there will usually be some one district more populous than the others, where a school of higher grade may be established and sustained. In some cases, all that is necessary is to enlarge the present accommodations and employ an assistant teacher.

The older and more advanced pupils, from all the districts of the town, could then be sent to this school, paying such a tuition as would be equitable.

A large proportion of the higher grades of public schools, out of the principal cities, are now open to pupils from other districts, and often to those from other towns. If this practice of receiving pupils from other districts shall be continued and extended till it embraces all public High schools in the State, there will be few children that may not enjoy the advantages of a good High school.

And these schools become blessings not only to the districts in which they are situated, but directly to all others in the vicinity, and indirectly to the State at large. There are few High schools in the State that would not be benefited by having their doors opened to pupils from other districts, whose character and attainments are such as to qualify them for a place in such a school. It is desirable that these schools be restricted to the legitimate work of a High school, and do not receive pupils who need the instruction and training which belong to the elementary schools.

The number of persons properly qualified for admission to a High school is not so great now, and will not be for years, as to make any High school, out of our principal cities, too large by admitting pupils to some extent from abroad.

As the establishment of High schools has frequently been the cause of the closing of Private schools and Academies which were open to all, it seems but just that these new institutions should afford to the sparsely populated districts an equivalent for the advantages formerly enjoyed in Academies.

The reports of School Visitors show that there are 30 towns in whose Public schools there are scholars pursuing the study of the languages, and 96 in which scholars are studying Algebra, Geometry, and Philosophy. Now, in most cases, twenty pupils may as well be

taught at a time, in one of these studies as two. If all the pupils in the town, pursuing these studies, can be brought into one school and taught together, a great saving in time and labor of instruction is made, and the teachers of ordinary District schools may be confined more entirely to elementary instruction. Thus there may be a division of labor and a systematic and comprehensive course of instruction that will secure the advantages of a good education to all.

It is true that the wealthy may send their children abroad for education, but it is also true that the great majority of the children of the State will obtain whatever they have of school education while under the roof of their parents or guardians.

Many of them will walk three or four miles for years to attend a school in the town in which they reside, when they could not bear the expense of board and tuition abroad.

It is then a matter of great importance that schools be established so as to give these children the advantages of a comprehensive and thorough education, without leaving their homes.

In those towns where the population is so scattered that no consolidation of districts or union of action can secure graded schools, the schools in the several districts should be made good schools, and continued for at least nine months in the year.

In some of the small districts the amount of public money distributed from the Town and State funds is two or three times as much per child as in the more populous districts. If the inhabitants of these districts would also contribute in the same proportion as in the districts where the best schools are found, means would be furnished to continue competent teachers for nine months in the year. And yet the reports show that these small mixed schools are, usually, continued for the least time and under the most inefficient teachers of any in the State.

There are a few honorable exceptions, where intelligence and a commendable interest has secured, even in very small agricultural districts, fine buildings and excellent teachers.

It cannot be expected that good schools will be established in all till a similar public spirit is manifested where the schools are now neglected.

The rapidity with which graded schools have been multiplied has often led to the establishment of different departments, without any very definite plan of classification or organization. As a consequence, the plan of study has not always been the wisest. In the mixed or common District schools a wide diversity also exists.

In compliance with the requests of school officers and teachers, and to meet the inquiries so often proposed to this department, brief schedules of studies adopted in good graded schools were published with the Annual Reports of 1856-57 and '58. These were intended to be suggestive to those towns or villages which had not adopted any regulations or course of study for the schools, and I learn, with pleasure, that these published schedules have been of benefit to school visitors in making out plans for schools under their supervision.

It seems to have been the policy of the State, for more than one hundred and fifty years, to commit the guardianship and oversight of the public schools to officers of the town, or school society, who should act as a check upon the improper distribution or use of the public moneys, and who should also visit the schools, and determine the qualifications of teachers. The act of 1708, authorized the constables in the several towns to deliver over the money, collected from the tax for support of schools, to the committee of schools, or to the selectmen of the town, who were to give certificates to improve said money according to law. In 1714, an act provided "that the civil authority and selectmen, in every town, or the major part of them," should inspect the schools, inquire into the qualifications of teachers, and give such directions as they should find needful. In the revised statutes, published in 1750, the civil authority and selectmen were still continued inspectors or visitors of schools, and the selectmen, or committee of the society, where there was more than one society in a town, were empowered to manage all lands and funds belonging to the town or school society, for the benefit of schools. After the passage of the act authorizing the sale of the public lands and the appropriation of the income for the benefit of schools, the laws respecting schools were revised and consolidated. This revision of May, 1799, empowered and directed the committee of each school society to take care of, and improve all moneys for the benefit of schools, and required the appointment, by each school society, of a suitable number of persons, not exceeding nine, of competent skill in letters, to be overseers or visitors of all the schools in such society, whose duty it was to examine the instructors and to displace such as were found deficient in any requisite qualifications or who would not conform to the regulations by them adopted, to superintend and direct the instruction of youth, to visit the schools twice at least during each season for schooling, with other duties relating to the management of the schools.

The powers and duties of School Visitors have been changed, from time to time, by the revision of the school laws, but have always included the examination of teachers and the visitation of schools. These are important requisitions and involve more than ordinary responsibilities.

There are other and important requirements connected with the office which affect the distribution of the public money, and consequently the school interests of the State. Upon the impartiality and faithfulness with which School Visitors exercise their powers and discharge their duties, depends, to a great degree, the condition and influence of Common Schools. In some towns, the Visitors are accustomed to hold monthly meetings with teachers. I believe much good is accomplished by such meetings. The teachers are stimulated to greater exertions, and the schools are better taught.

I believe that county conventions, consisting of the School Visitors of a county, held for the discussion of questions connected with the organization and classification of Common Schools, of rules and regulations for the same, and of the proper course of instruction, would be of great benefit. The improvements in some towns would thus be made known to others, and there might result from the testimony of the whole body of Visitors of a county, plans highly advantageous to the schools.

The diversity now existing in text-books, course of study, rules and regulations, can not be desirable or necessary. The great laws of mental growth and development are the same in all places. However numerous may be the variety of dispositions, and however varied the circumstances in which the child is placed, there are still great and fixed principles upon which all true culture must be based. These need to be better understood by parents and teachers.

Next to a proper system of graded schools where practicable, and a proper classification of mixed schools, a systematic and philosophical course of training and instruction is needed in all Common Schools.

To secure this, very much, it is true, depends upon teachers. It can not be expected that schools will be properly taught and children properly educated till those who are professedly the educators are thoroughly qualified.

Yet so long as the different Boards of School Visitors constitute the tribunals, which are to determine, by their approval or disapproval, what teachers shall be recognized in Common Schools, and are to de-

cide what shall be the rules and regulations, the studies, books and classification of the schools of the State, much of the responsibility rests with them, and every effort that can well be made to gain information and to promulgate important truths on the subject of Common School education is desirable.

LOCAL AND PERSONAL.

NEW HAVEN.—Several important changes have been made in the schools of this city. A High School has been established, and Wm. Kinne, Esq., late of the Eaton School, has been appointed principal. Mr. Mack, late of Guilford, has been appointed to the mastership of the Eaton School, and Mr. John G. Lewis, late an efficient teacher in the eastern section of the city, has been elected sub-master of the Webster School, in place of Mr. Johnson, resigned. We rejoice that the system of schools in New Haven has been perfected in the establishment of a High School. With the excellent school houses, and the present corps of accomplished teachers, the schools of this city cannot fail of a high rank. Of the New Haven schools we shall say more hereafter.

WILLIMANTIC.—Mr. Asa Perkins has been elected successor to Mr. Peck, in this place. Mr. P.'s scholarship and experience tend to fit him for this position.

NORMAL GRADUATES OF 1858.—Of the graduates of the last class from the Normal School, Mr. S. B. BISHOP is teacher at Waterbury; Mr. B. W. Maples, at East Bridgeport; Mr. GEO. McLEAN, at Portland; Mr. A. WARNER, at Newtown; Mr. WOODFORD, at East Hampton; Miss SARAH H. CHAMBERLAIN, High School, New Britain; Miss ANNA E. CARPENTER, at Greenwich; Miss ANNA A. CARTER, at Bridgewater. We wish them all abundant success.

STAMFORD.—A correspondent informs us that the Graded School of this place is in a very flourishing condition. It was made free in November, and has "been continually increasing in favor with the people." Within a year a library of 150 volumes has been procured, quite an addition has been made to the school apparatus, and a fine melodeon purchased,—and all the result of efforts on the part of the teachers and pupils. We rejoice in the success of this school. Mr. Balcam is principal; and Mr. Holley sub-master,—with efficient assistants for the several departments.

OUR JUNE NUMBER.—At a very late day we were obliged to prepare material for the present number, not receiving the usual aid from the gentleman duly appointed editor for the month. This is the first failure on the part of the Monthly Editors, and presume it was the result of unavoidable circumstances.

We have made quite an extract from the Report of our State Superintendent, which will be read with interest. Copies of the Report will be sent to the several School Visitors of the State. We shall allude to it more particularly in our next.

TEACHERS' MEETINGS.

STATE ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting of our State Association will be held at Danielsonville, on Thursday and Friday, June 16th and 17th. Lectures may be expected from Hon. D. N. CAMP, of New Britain; E. B. JENNINGS, Esq., of New London; Rev. M. RICHARDSON, of Worcester; WARREN BURTON, Esq., of Cambridge, Mass., and Prof. BAILEY, of New Haven. The customary accommodations will be furnished by the people of Danielsonville, and free return tickets may be expected over the several railroads. Shall we not have a large meeting? Will not the teachers throughout the State make a special effort to be present? We can assure them that Windham county, and Danielsonville in particular, will give them a cordial welcome. Circulars will be duly issued by the Secretary.

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.—The next meeting of this Association will be held at New Bedford.

NATIONAL TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.—The next meeting of this organization will be held in the city of Washington, commencing August 10th. The Lecturer from the New England section will be ELBRIDGE SMITH, Esq., of Norwich Free Academy. This Association is composed exclusively of teachers, and we hope the members of the profession will manifest their interest in its objects by being present at the approaching meeting. We anticipate much good from this Association. Let Connecticut be well represented.

BOOK NOTICES.

NEW ELEMENTARY ALGEBRA; embracing the first principles of the Science. By Charles Davies, LL. D. 12 mo. 299. New York: A. S. Barnes & Burr.

It would seem unnecessary to say a word in commendation of a book from the pen of Prof. Davies. His works are too well known and appreciated throughout the country to need any special notice. The work before us is beautifully printed, and seems to us admirably adapted to the wants of beginners. It is a complete revision of the old edition.

From the same publishers we have received a very convenient "School Register," prepared by Prof. Brooks. It is just what many teachers will be glad to obtain. (See advertisement of Barnes & Burr.)

THE ONTARIO TEACHER.—We have received three numbers of this new publication, and cordially welcome it as a co-laborer. It is edited by Messrs. Antisdale and McLaughlin, school commissioners for Ontario county, New York. The several numbers are well filled with readable matter.

We are under the necessity of deferring till our next the notices of several books and reports intended for this number.